

RAVEN GRIMASSI

AUTHOR AND LECTURER

Official Biography of Raven Grimassi



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Raven Grimassi is a published author of many titles on Witchcraft, Wicca, and Inner Mystery Traditions. He brings over 45 years of personal experience in the practice of ritual, magic, spell-casting, and occult mysticism.

Raven is the Co-Directing Elder of the Ash, Birch and Willow Tradition, a system reflecting the commonality of European rooted traditions of Witchcraft. The ABW system is based upon the Thorn Path of Witchery, which is an Old World practice of Witchcraft. Raven began focusing on this system in 2004 when introduced to the inner ways of the Thorn Path. Raven is also the co-Director of the Fellowship of the Pentacle - an umbrella organization for his work through various sources.

Raven was born in 1951 to an Italian immigrant who came to the United States as a War Bride in 1946. At an early age he began to study the folklore and Witchcraft of Italy, the Old Religion of Italy's past. His early training was a curious construction of a Catholic veneer fitted over archaic elements of Italian folk magic, folk customs, and peasant Witchcraft.

By age 18 it became Raven's passion to deepen his study of the Old Religion in an attempt to unlock its innermost secrets. In the summer of 1969 Raven discovered Wicca and was intrigued by the similarities between it and the Italian Craft. Seeking out like-minded people closer to his own age, Raven met a young woman who managed an Herb Shop in Old Town San Diego. She eventually introduced him to a woman who claimed to be a

[Home](#)

[Biography](#)

[Articles](#)

[Interviews](#)

[Books](#)

[DVDs / CDs](#)

[On Line Classes](#)

[Lectures / Workshops](#)

[Appearances](#)

[About My Work](#)

[Pictures](#)

[Raven's Loft](#)

[Nevermore](#)

[My Blog
A Bird's Eye View](#)

[Other Websites of Interest](#)

[Stregheria.com](#)

[The Fellowship of the
Pentacle](#)

Raven Grimassi

Raven Grimassi is the author of over seventeen books on Wicca and Witchcraft, including Wiccan Mysteries (awarded Best Book of the Year & Best Spirituality Book 1998 by the Coalition of Visionary Retailers), Encyclopedia of Wicca & Witchcraft (awarded Best Non-

Fiction Book 2001 by the Coalition of Visionary Retailers).

Raven Grimassi has been a teacher and practitioner of the Craft for nearly 45 years. He is trained in the Family tradition of Italian Witchcraft (also known as Stregheria), and is also an initiate of several Wiccan Traditions, including Brittish Wicca and the Pictish-Gaelic Tradition. He is currently the Co-Directing Elder of the Ash, Birch and Willow system of Witchcraft. Raven considers it his life's work to ensure the survival of ancient witch lore and legend along with ancestral teachings of the Old World Witchcraft.

Grimassi has worked as both a writer and editor for several magazines over the past decade, including *The Shadow's Edge* (a publication focusing on Italian Witchcraft) and *Raven's Call* (a journal of modern Wicca, Witchcraft and Magick).

Titles by Raven Grimassi:

- [Beltane](#)
- [Book of the Holy Strega](#)
- [The Book of Ways: Volumes I & II](#)
- [The Cauldron of Memory: Retrieving Ancestral Knowledge and Wisdom](#)
- [Crafting A Wiccan Tradition: Creating A Foundation For Your Spiritual Beliefs and Practices](#)
- [Encyclopedia of Wicca & Witchcraft](#)
- [Hereditary Witchcraft: Secrets of the Old Religion](#)
- [The Hidden Path Oracle Deck](#)
- [Italian Witchcraft: The Old Religion of Southern Europe](#)
- [Old World Witchcraft: Ancient Ways for Modern Days](#)
- [Spirit of the Witch: Religion & Spirituality in Contemporary](#)

Gardnerian witch High Priestess called Lady Heather. She later initiated Raven into Wicca, but he was eventually to discover that her claims to Gardnerian Wicca were unfounded. However, Raven considers her teachings to be sound and in keeping with known and accepted elements of traditional Wicca.

In 1974 Raven studied Wicca under Lady Sara Cunningham for the traditional "year and a day". He then formed his own system of practice, which was a blend of Lady Heather and Lady Sara's teachings mixed together with elements of Italian witchcraft. Raven later formed a small group known as the Coven of Sothis, which operated for a few years in the San Diego area. In 1975 Raven became a member of the First Temple of Tiphareth and began a serious study of the Kabbalah, a mystical Hebrew system.

It was during his study of the Kabbalah that Raven met and became friends with Donald Michael Kraig, author of *Modern Magick* and *Modern Sex Magick*. That same year (1975) Raven was introduced to a High Priestess and High Priest (Phil & Joanne) in the San Diego area where the couple were well known. They became friends, and Raven was initiated into their tradition of Brittish Wicca, a system claiming to be a blend of Basque Witchcraft and English Wicca. It contained elements of traditional Witchcraft along with folkloric elements reflective of the regions where its foundational roots originated.

By the summer of 1979 Raven felt that this period of exploration into Wicca was complete and he returned to the sole practice of Italian witchcraft. In the fall of 1979 he started classes on the Italian Craft at Ye Olde Enchantment Shoppe in San Diego. One of the people attending was Scott Cunningham. Raven and Scott became friends, and in 1980, Scott was initiated into the Aridian Tradition of Italian witchcraft, a system formed by Raven that same year. The Aridian tradition was a construction of Wiccan elements mixed into the ways of the Italian Craft that was part of Raven's own training. Scott remained a first degree initiate during his three years of study with Raven. Because of growing differences it was mutually agreed that Scott should be released, and he moved on from the Aridian Tradition in favor of a heavily self-styled view of modern Wicca. Scott was later to publish his self-styled "Wicca" through a series of books.

In 1981 Raven was a writer and editor for *The Shadow's Edge*, a magazine focused on Italian witchcraft. He was later a contributing writer and editor for two other magazines, *Moon Shadow* and *Raven's Call*. This same year Raven wrote several booklets including *The Book of the Holy Strega*, and a two volume set titled *Book of Ways*, published by Nemi Enterprises in San Diego, California. These books came to be referred to as "the blue books" because of their covers. Many photocopy versions of this book manifested and have been passed through the Craft Community for many years.

In 1983, Raven accepted third degree initiation into the Pictish-Gaelic Tradition in order to help preserve its teachings, but served as a guardian of the material rather than a full participant in the

Witchcraft

- **The Well Worn Path: Divination Kit**
- **Wiccan Magick: Inner Teachings of the Craft**
- **The Wiccan Mysteries: Ancient Origins & Teachings**
- **The Witches' Craft: The Roots of Witchcraft & Magical Transformation**
- **The Witch's Familiar: Spiritual Partnerships for Successful Magic**
- **Witchcraft: A Mystery Tradition**

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tradition. In 2001 Grimassi received third degree initiation into the Traditionalist Celtic Tradition through the First Wiccan Church (Escondido, California).

In 2004, Raven ceased practicing Stregheria and stepped down as the directing Elder. He then devoted his time to exploring non-specific cultural themes.

In 2006, Raven founded the Ash, Birch and Willow tradition of Witchcraft, which is a non-cultural system rooted in the primal perspectives of our distant human ancestors.

Raven formerly served as editor/writer for Raven's Call magazine. He now works as co-director of the Fellowship of the Pentacle, and co-directing Elder of the Ash, Birch and Willow tradition. He is devoted to preserving and teaching the Mystery Tradition of pre-Christian Europe. Having been born on the festival day of the goddess Ceres (Patron of the Mysteries) Raven maintains a shrine in her honor.

He is the author of seventeen books on Wicca and Witchcraft, including **The Wiccan Mysteries**, which was awarded Book of the Year and First Place - Spirituality Book by the Coalition of Visionary Retailers in 1998, **Ways of the Strega** (re-released as **Italian Witchcraft**), **Wiccan Magick**, **Hereditary Witchcraft**, **Encyclopedia of Wicca and Witchcraft**, **Beltane - Springtime Rituals, Lore, and Celebration**, **The Witches' Craft**, **Crafting A Wiccan Tradition**, **Witches' Familiar**, **Spirit of the Witch**, **Witchcraft - A Mystery Tradition**, **The Cauldron of Memory**, **The Book of Ways I and II**, **The Book of the Holy Strega**, **Old World Witchcraft**, and **Grimoire of the Thorn-Blooded Witch**.